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INFORMATIÓN REPORT

COUNTRY

Spain/France

DATE DISTR.

2 December 1948

SUBJECT

Socialist Guerrillas in Asturias

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PLACE ACQUIRED

DATE OF INFO

NO. OF ENCLS. (LISTED BELOW)

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

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- Twenty-nine Asturian PRIETO Socialist guerrillas, including the entire Executive Committee of the Socialist Party of Asturias and the Executive Committee of the miners' Union General de Trabajadores (UGT), escaped from Spain to France in the latter part of October 1948. Indalecio PRIETO and Amador FERNANDEZ had been preparing this expedition for four months, according to source.
- 2. The regularly organized Socialist Party Committees having been arrested, the Party directed that new committees be selected partly from among the guerrillas and that the remaining members join the guerrillas, and the resulting committees were thus able to avoid arrest.
- 3. The majority of the guerrillas did not want to go to France, but were compelled to go by Party orders. Some of them will return if possible to Asturias. in order to raise the morale of their comrades who remained there, and to continue some form of opposition activity. Their activities for some time past have been largely confined to defense against the Police and the Guardia Civil, because offensive action met with reprisals against women and the aged. They received orders from PRIETO some time ago to cease collaborating with the Communist guerrillas.
- 4. The Socialist guerrillas said that the majority of the Communists had been eliminated, and that those who remained were virtually powerless since few of them were native to the country and they had only two or three guides who knew the country well. They need weapons and ammunition, although they have more than the Socialists. Both the Socialists and the Communists frequently buy ammunition from Franco men, paying for it in gold.

The situation, according to these guerrillas, is as desperate for the Communists as it is for the other guerrillas, since retaliatory action is increasing and reinforcements are constantly being sent in by the Government, often disguised as shepherds, as miners and even as guerrillas. The Covernment counterespionage is very well organized. Summing up the situation, the Socialist guerrillas said: "If arms and money were available, much could be done. Without them, absolutely nothing can be done if we get no help from outside."

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

6. Most of the Socialist guerrillas were sent by the French authorities to a work camp at Besancon. The eight members of the two committees expected to go to St. Jean de Luz to see PRIETO. They are:

Socialist Party Committee

President: Jose MATA Casero Secretary: Mario FERNANDEZ Garcia

Members: Faustino HELGUERA Garcia and Manuel FERNAPDEZ Casas

WGT Miners' Committee

President: Aristides LLANEZA Jove

Secretary: Manuel FERNANDEZ Villanueva

Members: Juan HELGUERA Garcia (brother of Faustino) and

Manuel FERNAUDEZ Peon.